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(b) whether the Government have made enquiries into this matter and whether they propose to grant any remission for the loss sustained ;

(c) whether the Government are aware that the second crops have completely failed in many parts of Malabar on account of the failure of the last north-east monsoon ; and

(d) whether they propose to grant any remission for the above loss ?

A.—(a) & (b) The hon. Member is referred to the Collector's report dated 16th September 1923 printed in G.O. No. 1469, Revenue, dated 28th September 1923, which has already been placed on Editors' Table.

(c) The Government are aware that second crops have failed in some parts of Malabar on account of the failure of the north-east monsoon.

(d) Under the rules in Board's Standing Order No. 13, the Collector and the Jamabandi officer are competent to grant remission for loss of crops.

Failure of crops in Malabar.

304 Q.—MR. K. PRABHAKARAN TAMPAN: Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government are aware that on account of unprecedented drought the second crop in Malabar has completely failed ;

(b) whether the Government have taken steps to ascertain the extent of the damage ; if not, whether they propose to do so ; and

(c) whether the Government propose to remit the assessment levied on such crops in the affected places ?

A.—(a) The Government are aware that the second crop has failed in parts of Malabar owing to the unfavourable character of the season.

(b) The Collector is making the necessary inquiries.

(c) Under the rules in the Board's Standing Order No. 13, the Collector and the Jamabandi officer are competent to grant remission for loss of crops.

Public Works (Buildings).

Divisional offices at Devakottai.

305 Q.—RAO BAHADUR A. M. MURUGAPPA CHETTIYAR: Will the hon. the Member for Revenue, the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government and the hon. the Minister for Education and Public Works be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Divisional offices at Devakottai have been constructed in a place far removed from and with no proper communication with the town ;

(b) whether in selecting the site for the construction of the offices the convenience of the public was taken into consideration ;

(c) whether it is a fact that during the rainy season people find it very difficult to go to the offices owing to the river in the way ;

(d) whether it is a fact that the District Board of Ramnad applied for help to the Government to construct a bridge over the river, and the Government refused to grant any help ; and

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(e) whether the Government propose to construct a bridge over the river in view of the great inconvenience caused to the people?

A.—(a) The Divisional office at Devakottai is situated at a distance of half a mile from the town. There is no bridge across the river which separates the office from the town.

(b) The site was approved by a Site Committee.

(c) Yes. The Government have issued orders for the temporary location of the office on the northern side of the river during the rainy season.

(d) On receipt of plans and estimates for the construction of a bridge, the District Board was asked to report how it proposed to finance the work. The President requested that the cost be met entirely from Provincial funds. He was then asked to report whether the Board was willing to finance the scheme by means of a loan, but he enquired whether a grant of half the cost would be sanctioned. He was informed that no promise of a half grant could be given.

(e) The answer is in the negative. It is for the District Board to construct a bridge.

The RAJA OF RAMNAD :—“ May I request the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government to kindly reconsider the answer given to clause (e) and try to see that a bridge is constructed ? ”

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—“ Mr. President, Sir, the question asked by the hon. Member has received the very careful consideration of the Government. It is a question of the financial condition of the province. I cannot give any assurance without consulting my Colleagues. ”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ Moreover it is a suggestion for action. ”

Village establishments.

Revision of Village establishments.

306 Q.—Mr. YAHYA ALI SAHIB : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) the number of posts of village officers and menials reduced by the Board of Revenue both in the ryotwari and in the proprietary areas, in connexion with the recent general revision of village establishments subsequent to the increase in their salaries; and

(b) the total amount of saving involved thereby?

A.—The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the statement at page 65 of the Report of the Madras Retrenchment Committee, Volume I, which has been placed on the Council table. Up to date information is not available.

Mr. YAHYA ALI SAHIB :—“ Sir, the answer given contains information up to 19th September 1923. May I ask the Government to bring it up to date, say till December 1923 ? ”

The hon. the RAJA OF KOLLENGODE :—“ We have not got the figures; it is rather difficult to collect the figures. Yet, we will do it. ”